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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Legislative Committee on Woman Suffrage

IN THE

CONN. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 2, 1887,

BY FRANCES ELLEN BURR.

PUBLISHED BY THE HARTFORD EQUAL RIGHTS CLUB.

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PRESS OF THE FOWLER & MILLER COMPANY, 341 MAIN STREET.

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GENTLEMEN: It would seem as unnecessary to come here year after year to argue the right of women to a voice in their own government as to stand on the shore of the river and argue the right of a drowning man to be pulled out of the water. I don't know whether it is a pleasant entertainment or an irksome duty to you to listen to our yearly arguments. However that may be, it is anything but a pleasant entertainment to us. It is a question whether the close of this century will not see women still climbing these Capitol stairs with their petitions. I know it is the more popular way to take a rose-colored view of things and claim that the millennium is at our doors; but truth is better than roses, even though it reveal things that are not quite so pleasant. I am inclined to think the twentieth century will dawn on our nation still but half a republic. Yet we are not going backward, but forward, as Kansas shows, which has just granted municipal suffrage to women—the first State to do so—and as is also shown by the Senate of New York State, which has just passed a similar bill. And if the Senate of Connecticut had not so many times in the past proven itself a deadly foe to woman suffrage, I should be more hopeful that it would wheel into line with the other States and Territories that have taken a forward step in this matter. Our State is the land of “blue laws” and conservatism; still, our Senate has, I believe, a little brighter outlook than usual as to liberal views on the woman suffrage question, so we will hope for better things than its past record would warrant us in hoping.

The bill before you, gentlemen, or one of them, at least, calls for all the suffrage you can grant us, that is, the vote for Presidential electors and for municipal officers. For more than twenty years women have voted in Wyoming Territory with the best results, as has been attested by the best authorities. Utah came next, and for the past three years they have voted in Washington Territory. Besides these Territories, they vote in school elections in twelve States. These States are New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachu-

setts, New York, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Oregon, Iowa, Michigan, and Kentucky. Women have heretofore voted in Kansas in school elections, and this has proved so successful that that State has now added municipal suffrage. In England woman suffrage is more popular than in this country, for women of high rank have taken the matter in hand there. Municipal suffrage for women has been in force there for some years, and it is not at all unlikely that they will win the battle for full suffrage before we do. There would be a certain fitness in this in a country whose sovereign is a woman. There is a strong party working for it all the time, and the British Parliament is besieged with petitions every year, the same as our own Congress. It has been supported in Parliament by some of the best minds of England, beginning with John Stuart Mill in 1867. Among these are such men as Jacob Bright, Disraeli (afterwards Earl of Beaconsfield), Lord John Manners, Russell Gurney, Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Playfair, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Stansfield, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Villiers. Mr. Theodore Stanton, in his book on "The Woman Question in Europe," says :

"The debate on the bill in the year 1871 was rendered remarkable by a speech from Mr. Gladstone, in which, although declaring that he did not feel able to vote for the bill, he adduced such cogent arguments in its favor that the speakers who followed him predicted his speedy enrollment in the list of its supporters. He concluded by calling upon those who wished well to their country to devise some means by which women could exercise political influence through 'a safe and well-adjusted alteration of the law as to political power.'"

Lord Iddesleigh, who has recently died, was a staunch supporter of woman suffrage, both in the House of Commons as Sir Stafford Northcote and in the House of Peers as Lord Iddesleigh. The *Women's Suffrage Journal* of England, in a late issue, says of him :

"His name is now added to those of departed statesmen, held in honored memory by their country, who were not afraid to join in the demand for political justice to women. The roll which contains the names of John Stuart Mill, Benjamin Disraeli, Russell Gurney, Joseph Henley, Hugh Cairns, and Henry Fawcett, is now continued by that of one worthy to rank with the best—that of Stafford Northcote."

A recent number of a paper published in Bombay, the *Indian Spectator*, contains a vigorous letter from Prof. Max Mueller, the great philologist, in which he says: "They (women) begin to be a

power, and they have one splendid quality—they are never beaten. If they once know what is going on in India—alluding to infant marriages tolerated by an English Government—they will tell every candidate for Parliament: ‘Unless this blot is removed from the escutcheon of England, you shall not be reëlected.’ ”

It is a significant straw when a man like Max Mueller, immersed in his Sanscrit studies, sees that women are beginning to be a power, and urges them to use their political influence, or to work on political lines to help elect or prevent the election of members of Parliament. It is a straw that points significantly to the fact that women, whether they will or not, have got to become political factors and bring their influence to bear on the cause of righteousness and just legislation. Whether that future be near or remote, no one can tell. Let us hope that fate has written it down for what is called “the near future,” whatever that may be. Another equally significant straw I found in last Sunday’s *New York Tribune*, in Mr. G. W. Smalley’s London letter. He says:

“The Liberals have now a Primrose League of their own, entitled the Women’s Liberal Federation, over which Mrs. Gladstone yesterday presided. Like the Primrose League, this federation is an electioneering agency. The Tories, under Lord Randolph Churchill’s guidance, were the first to discover that women—admittedly the best canvassers—would canvass better still if organized. The Liberals were appalled by the efficiency of the Primrose League at the last election, and have now wisely set up a counter machine. Mrs. Gladstone’s brief but interesting speech was full of point and hope, and women in politics seem henceforth destined to occupy a leading position in England.”

When conservative England looks to women for help, as in the case of the powerful Primrose League, which works in the interest of the Tories, and now in the case of this Women’s Liberal Federation, with Mrs. Gladstone at its head, I think we in this country can look on with satisfaction and take renewed hope. Before leaving England I would like to make a short quotation from a recent number of *The Englishwoman’s Review*, another excellent organ of the woman suffrage party in England. It is from an article on “Twenty Years of Woman Suffrage Work,” and I quote it merely to show that the work of the advocates of woman suffrage has not been in vain; it has been laying the foundations of future success. The same may be said of the work in this country. When the work gets beyond the foundations, then the structure will begin to show. The article I refer to says:

"Twenty years ago the legal condition of women was 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' in no ordinary degree. This was true even of single women, who endured all the disabilities under which Non-Conformists or Catholics labored two centuries back. They were shut out from the higher education of the universities, and they were debarred from entering on the learned professions. But the position of a wife was infinitely worse; it was equivalent to legal slavery. From the moment a woman married, her property was confiscated, her earnings belonged of absolute right to another. She was linked for life to a man who might abuse or torment her without any counterbalancing claim on him for maintenance, while her children were not hers in the eye of the law, neither during the life of her despot nor after his death. It has taken many years of a struggle that has been little less than heroic to secure, one by one, these natural rights, and they are far from being all won yet. The most palpable injustice of all, the deprivation by marriage of all power to hold property, was the stronghold first attacked. This agitation commenced thirty years ago, but it was only during this later period that it became effective. One step after another was gained. A Married Woman's Property Act was passed in England in 1870 which gave the disposal of her earnings to the actual earner instead of to her lord and master. This was not granted without long hesitation, but it was the first breach in the intrenchments, which henceforward had no chance to hold out against repeated attacks. . . . It was left to the session of 1882 to pass a just and complete measure by which the rights to property and the liberty to contract were guaranteed to married women. Side by side with this great reform, others were achieved. Judicial separations for women who were brutally treated by their husbands were not granted till 1878, . . . but a wife who was not knocked down, but only deserted, had no power to sue her husband for a maintenance. This injustice was remedied last year, and it is now optional for an ordinary magistrate to order a defaulting husband to contribute to the support of his wife and to give her children to her charge," etc., etc.

So much for England. Of course, these things had got to come, and still others will have to come, for if one thing is more patent than another in this whole question it is that one-half the race was not born to rule the other half. Had this been the case, that other half would have been born with as little intellect as the cattle on a thousand hills. When nature endowed women with brains of their own, she intended them to make the same use of them that men do of theirs. At a recent dinner in New York, Henry Ward Beecher said it was the curse of European governments that they insist upon taking care of the people. That is just the case with all governments with regard to women. It is

the curse of all governments that they insist upon taking care of women as they do of babies—holding them down in the perpetual swaddling clothes of minorhood, and then arguing that they have not the capacity to govern. They never will have till they can be allowed the liberty to use their faculties in that line. Serfdom, political or otherwise, is the prolific mother of incapacity. The standard argument that women do not want to vote is a weak one. Granting, for the sake of the argument, that they do *not* want to vote, it does not alter the principle that it is right that they should have the chance to vote should they wish to. Many men do not wish to vote, but I have never heard it suggested that they be disfranchised on that account. But hundreds of thousands of women in this country do want to vote, as the vast rolls of petitions to legislatures and to Congress testify. I am not aware that a single negro ever sent in a petition to Congress for the ballot, and yet that fact was never urged as an objection to granting negro suffrage. A million negroes, more or less, were enfranchised at one stroke, and the majority of them knew not a letter of the English alphabet. This was not their fault. There was at one time a law in some of the Southern States forbidding, under severe penalty, any one teaching a negro to read. Those laws furnish a significant parallel to certain laws restraining women of their rights. The enactment of such laws argues the capacity of those against whom they are enacted to exercise their faculties in the forbidden direction. Who ever heard of a law forbidding any one to teach a horse to read? It would almost make a horse laugh to think of it. And who ever heard of a law forbidding a horse to vote, or take a hand—or a hoof, if you please—in his own government? Nature's fiat is stronger than any statute on the books, and she needs none of them to assist her. She has placed obstacles in the way of a horse becoming a politician; therefore, it is superfluous to make laws to strengthen that state of things. She has placed no obstacles in the way of a woman becoming a politician, nor of her using her faculties in matters of government; therefore, it is useless to block her way with statute books. Her freedom is written on the book of fate. Whether it comes in this century or another makes but little difference in the long run, though it is of consequence to the people living in this age that the course of progress be no longer hindered by woman's disfranchisement. Laws that are worthy only of the dark ages should be removed and the way opened up for still

further advancement by giving a chance to other important questions that are pressing on all sides. One step of progress but leads to another, and that is the way to climb up and on forever. But all great advance steps are generally forced, either at the point of the bayonet or in the stress of some great party. A Washington paper recently said that women could get the ballot in a week if they wanted it. But I differ with it. The petitioners who have sent their names into Congress by hundreds of thousands during the past forty years have apparently made little impression upon members and Senators. Some Western man has said that petitions have about as much effect upon legislative bodies as paregoric upon a graven image. The remark is certainly pointed, if not entirely truthful. I believe women will never get the ballot till some political party finds it for its interest to have them vote. It was political policy that enfranchised the negro, not disinterested justice. The Republican party did it to save its own neck. And when any party—I don't care what one it is—sees its opportunity in woman suffrage, women will leap into the kingdom of enfranchisement at one bound. It is ever thus that great measures of justice are secured, and ever will be till we have a higher race than we have at present. Abraham Lincoln, with the Republican party back of him, held back the emancipation proclamation as long as possible. He said the war was not to free the negro, but to maintain the Union. But the Abolitionists, with clearer eyes than politicians, knew what it all meant, and the proclamation had to come. Afterwards the negro had to be enfranchised, for the party wanted his vote. The arguments against woman suffrage on the ground of incapacity were not put forward in the case of the negro; they were given the ballot, and at one time the State of South Carolina occupied the humiliating position of being governed by negroes, two-thirds or more of the Legislature of that State being composed of blacks who knew not A from B, much less the principles with which they were called to deal. After that the people began to realize the importance of educating their governors. I believe in negro's rights as well as woman's rights—human rights is the better term—but I think everyone now must acknowledge the injustice, the absolute wrong, of putting the government of a State into the hands of such a body of grossly ignorant men as was the case in South Carolina some years ago. And yet so great is the force of prejudice that undoubtedly a majority of mankind would elect to be governed by a body of full-

blooded Congo negroes, as ignorant as the wild beasts of their native jungles, in preference to a body of educated, refined women. As Wendell Phillips once said, "People see with their prejudices and not with their eyes." The prejudice of centuries has taken too deep root to be easily removed, as the woman suffrage movement of the past forty years shows; but the work, though slow, has been sure, and the improvement in the laws in regard to women, as compared with what they were half a century ago, attests the importance of that work. A hundred years ago, and more, Abigail Adams, that woman of remarkable character, the mother of one President and the wife of another, felt the importance of woman suffrage, when, in 1776, she wrote to her husband, John Adams, then in the Continental Congress, saying: "I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors were. Do not put unlimited power in the hands of husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention are not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound to obey any law in which we have no voice or representation."

After the declaration of independence she wrote again: "I cannot say that I think you generous to the ladies, for while you are emancipating men you insist on retaining absolute power over us."

Abigail Adams had the courage of her convictions, though I do not agree with her that all men would be tyrants if they could. The injustice that still remains in the laws in regard to women is attributable to two things—prejudice in many cases, and indifference in others—and these influence women as well as men. But the advance of the world is gradually rectifying this in both cases, for both men and women are reasoning beings and cannot blink the truth forever. Henry George, in the last number but one of his paper, *The Standard*, says:

"The natural right of a woman to vote is just as clear as that of a man, and rests on the same ground. Since she is called on to obey the laws, she ought to have a voice in making them; and the assumption that she is not fit to vote is no better reason for denying her that right than was the similar assumption which has been urged against every extension of the franchise to unfranchised men. And whether men like, or do not like, the imputation that they are incapable of framing proper laws without the aid of women, their success in making laws has certainly not been so great as to give them a reason for disdaining women's aid. . . .

The man who scorns the advice of women is anything but a wise man. And seeing that mankind is composed of men and women, and that the two sexes are the natural complements of each other, is not the leaving of what concerns both entirely to one sex very much like the attempt of an individual to use only one leg in walking? Women have to-day a very great influence in politics, but that influence is, for the most part, an evil influence for the reason that women do not think much about political or social questions, regarding them as out of their sphere, and so have very little conscience as to public matters. And this fact, no doubt, largely accounts for the flippancy of general thought on social questions. Men, as a rule, will not become fully interested in any subject that does not also interest women. It may well be doubted if giving women a vote would much increase their own direct influence in politics; but it cannot be questioned that it would lead them to take such an interest in public affairs as would powerfully react upon men themselves."

So much for Mr. George, whose logic, on this matter at least, is unquestionable. Dr. Johnson, of England—the dictionary man—once said that the reason women were made subordinate to men was not because they were inferior, but because when two ride one horse one of them must ride behind. There's a hearty, blunt honesty about that which is admirable. He comes right to the point without any dodging: "One of us has got to ride behind, and it shall be you." That tells the whole story in good, honest, queen's English. There have been many long arguments to show cause why women should not vote, but they all fail to come to the point directly and clearly, as did the blunt old Englishman in two lines. One of the arguments used by many is that it would be unsafe to let women vote, as the Creator has placed her in a subordinate position. But if that is the case, why are they alarmed? Do they fear the purposes of the Almighty will be overturned by a ballot? That makes the Creator subordinate to the creature. Their logic limps. Undoubtedly if women ever do obtain the ballot they will overturn the purposes of some of God's creatures; but it is well for the race that His will is not subject to political elections on this planet. The laws that make political nonentities of women are a confession on their face that nature endowed them with faculties for being something better. Had she not, there would be no occasion for such laws. Men do not put up bolts and bars where there's nothing to break through. There is nothing on the statute books forbidding the enfranchisement of dogs and horses. That shows implicit reliance on divine law; but the statutes in regard

to women show total lack of it, or, worse than that, the logic of them is that they are an effort to thwart divine law.

The law treats women as infants except at the tax-collector's office and at the gallows. It may be safely said that no man is ambitious to represent them at those places; men prefer to have women perfectly independent there. These are the only places where men and women meet and strike hands on perfect equality. Elsewhere, women are legally infants. One of these infants has just been hung in New York State. Undoubtedly she deserved it, though the hanging of either men or women should no longer be tolerated in a Christian land. The *Providence Journal* of yesterday says:

"So long as the law stands, it is just that there should be no distinction of sex, but, nevertheless, the sense of the barbarity of the punishment is deeply intensified by the execution of a woman."

No doubt of that. Legally infants, they are tried and condemned without a jury of their peers. One of these infants was hung in Washington some twenty years ago under national jurisdiction; and, being a national affair, it ought to have aroused the nation to the enormity of the crime of hanging people untried by a jury of their peers. They strung her up between the heavens and the earth, and fifteen millions of women, paralyzed by long ages of political serfdom, looked indifferently on, as dumb as the sheep before his shearers. The question of her guilt or innocence is not to the point. It matters not how black her crimes may have been; there is one that outvies them all in blackness, and that is the crime of the government that shuts the mouths of a class of people and then takes their lives. When this government took the life of Mary Surratt, it furnished a gallows of as deep significance to the women of this land as the gallows of John Brown to the black race. Though its victim may have plotted treason and murder, unconsciously she did something better; for in ascending the scaffold she showed that when women fall by the nation's hand they should have a voice in the government of the nation. And from the dying breath of Mary Surratt rings out the question: How long, with sealed lips, are women to be launched into eternity, or sentenced for life to a living tomb? The crimes they commit may be bad enough, but the crimes of those who condemn them in direct violation of the fundamental principles of this government, and of common justice, are worse. Can it be supposed that men

would be willing that one of their number should be tried, condemned, and executed, and they have no voice in the matter?—not a man for juror, judge, nor counsel? Murder is murder, whoever falls the victim, but the worst of all murders is a legal murder.

We are told that the laws all favor women—that they are made for their protection. True. But where can we find a keener commentary on the political status of women than in these laws for their protection? Why do they need so much protecting? Simply because the law renders them powerless to protect themselves—deprives them of the means of self-defence, and so has to hedge them about with special laws for their protection. It could not well do otherwise. That man would be a fiend in human form who could cripple another and then deny him crutches. The laws do favor women, but on the same principle that the laws of the household favor the baby. All must stand aside for the baby; all must humor the caprices of the baby; a tyrant on his tiny couch is the baby. And why? Because, helpless as the wind-tossed leaf, he lies at the mercy of others. Woman, deprived of the power of governing herself, lies at the feet of government, only an overgrown baby. Crippled by law, she has to go on the crutches provided by the power that cripples her. Do they who maintain that the laws place all the advantage with women maintain that it is better to hobble through life on crutches than to go on sound legs of your own? Do they swallow such chaff themselves? Not they. A Connecticut lawyer once wrote an article trying to show that the women of this State have more rights than men—that the latter are the wronged party if anybody. He probably had not read the Sherwood case, which was in the courts of this State not long before he wrote his article. In that case a woman was arrested in her own house by a sheriff, accompanied by her husband, and committed to the Bridgeport jail, where she lay for six months for the crime of having retained possession of her own property; she refused to sign it all away into her husband's hands after he had squandered a good part of it. The Supreme Court of Errors, into which the case was carried, decided that it was perfectly legal to imprison a woman under such circumstances. It is only within the past ten years that the laws of this State have been sufficiently modified to give a wife a claim to her own earnings. Before 1877 the earnings of the wife vested in her husband. There are other States in the Union where they do still. And in this State still the children belong to the father, even to the exclu-

sion of the mother. Courts frequently, and perhaps generally, assign them to the mother, for courts are sometimes kinder than the laws. But without some special act of the court they go to the father. This exclusive control of the child by the father is elementary law. The right of the mother as natural guardian to the custody of her children, after the death of the father, is inferior to the right of a guardian appointed by the Court of Probate. The mother is not, by law, the natural guardian of her own child.

It is the custom of Chinese women, in their daily devotions in their pagan temples, to pray that in the next state of existence they may be men—so great is their political degradation in this. And it is the custom of the Turk, in his daily devotions, to thank his God that he was not born a woman. It strikes me that a similar return of thanks would not be altogether inappropriate in this hemisphere.

What is this thing called government, with which women are told they must have nothing to do—must stand outside of, and be indifferent to? It is the thing that concerns them in all the relations of life; it concerns the bread they put into their mouths, the clothes they put on their backs, the shelter over their heads, the education to fit them for life. It is the thing that imprisons the wife for holding on to her own property; it is the thing that blots her name and herself as an individual, responsible being out of existence from the hour she turns away from the priest a married woman. It is the thing that clutches the last dollar from the widow's pocket to pay the taxes on the little house that shelters her, then thrusts her aside and tells her she has no voice in the matter. It is the thing that kidnaps the child from the mother that gave it existence, then tells her she is not its natural guardian and has no control over it. It is the thing that confronts them with grinning teeth at every turn and corner; and where shall they go to get outside of it, and to be indifferent to it, unless you drive them forty miles into the bowels of the earth, or as far the other way in a balloon?

Had all the governments that ever existed been perfectly successful, there would still be no argument for shutting women out; the principle would still be the same. But when we reflect that not one such government is known in the annals of the world, the inconsistency of such arguments appears still more remarkable. Kingdoms, empires, and republics, unstable as the sands of the desert—their wrecks strew the page of history from the days of

Babylon the Great down to our own Babylon of modern slavery. They track their way down the ages in one red stream of blood. The proudest dynasties have kissed the dust, and those still left are tottering to their fall. In their pride, men dreamed their kingdoms would last forever—but they died. In their pride they dreamed their empires would last forever—but they died. In their pride they dreamed their republics would last forever—but they died—died and went under the sod and left no trace behind, and the winds that blow their requiem ask—where?

No one supposes that women could have prevented these results, but it is not within the bounds of possibility that they could have made things worse. Probably they could not vote the millennium in were they allowed a chance to try, but it is equally certain that we cannot reach the most distant approach to it without them. No nation can ride to permanent prosperity over the necks of half the race. Government, rightly administered, would set so lightly as to be unfelt; its hand would fall on all alike, as gently as the dews of heaven and as beneficially.

Had nature intended women to be as subordinate as the cattle on a thousand hills, she would have given them as little sense. But when, in her divine economy, she endowed them with souls and brains of their own, she enacted a law higher than that on any statute book, and legislators who address themselves to the task of annulling this law will find in the end that it is a task as difficult as that of voting the planet out of its orbit. We are governed here, as in all other worlds, by the divine law of positive and negative principles, or masculine and feminine. They are the centripetal and centrifugal forces that uphold the planets and bear us on our flight through space a thousand miles a minute, without the deviation of a hair's breadth, and as gently as though rocked in the arms of a mother. These principles permeate all nature, and they are as important in the machinery of government as in that of the planetary system. But governments have thus far ignored one of these principles, and governments have thus far limped on one leg. But this principle cannot forever be ignored, for advancing science will discover that these two principles complement each other, and that each is equally important to a well-balanced government. You cannot legislate a true principle out of existence. It will assert itself. It is beyond the reach of statute makers and executioners. Lamartine tells us how the twenty-one Girondins on their way to execution struck up "La

Marseillaise," and continued singing till the moment of death. They rode four in a cart. In one cart there were five, the fifth one being the dead body of Valazé, who had killed himself in the convention on learning their approaching fate. His head rested on the lap of a companion, his pallid face upturned to the sky. But with the ghastly spectacle under their eyes, and the ghastly fate awaiting them, they sang on, oblivious to everything but the sublime principle for which they died. Arrived at the guillotine they alighted, embraced, and continued their singing, which lessened voice by voice, as head after head dropped into the basket, till at last one voice alone bore up the notes, high and clear—and the axe descended—the head fell—and the voices were all hushed. But not the principle for which they died. That lived on in perennial youth. Happily principles do not originate and do not die with their advocates; they carry in themselves the elements and the guarantee of success, and no amount of opposition can kill them. You may fight a sunbeam with all the implements of modern warfare, but the sunbeam will come off victorious. Were every word and trace of the movement for woman's enfranchisement to be blotted from the records and from the memories of the people, and were every one of its advocates to die to-morrow—before the sod above them had grown green—the elements for a similar movement would be at work, and coming generations, without any hint that such a movement had ever before existed, would carry it on to victory. We are enlisted in a war that is to be carried on, not by bullets and bomb-shells, but by the batteries of God's eternal truth—more potent than all else. The world has celebrated a good many victories; trumpets have sounded them, cannon have thundered them, poets have sung them; but the world has never seen the day dawn on such a victory as it will see when one half the human race shall come up from their state of ignominious subjection into the full light and possession of liberty.

Liberty—the dream of the world; the old, old story, yet always fresh and new. High up in the early morning, the bird sings it. The balmy west wind whispers it in our ears. The pink-white blooms of May that crown our trees with their glory waft it on the wings of their perfume. The waving grain and corn fields in the summer wind rustle it. It gleams and glows, in shifting hues, in the woods of Indian summer. The mountain brook babbles it to the river, the river to the sea, and the sea in white-capped billows chants it. All join to swell the mighty chorus: Free!

Free! Free! to live out just the life our Creator intended—to exercise our powers unhindered.

And shall woman, of all this broad creation, forever be compelled to say: Not free to live out the life our Creator intended—to exercise, to their full extent, the powers with which we are endowed? Shall she forever let the voice of her reason and conscience lie dumb, while she comes and goes at the bidding of another? No! No! No! shout the myriad voices of nature.

“She knows the seed lies safe below
The fires that blast and burn;
For all the tears of blood we sow
She waits the rich return.”